FRANK READE

WEEKLY MAGAZINE,

Containing Stories of Adventures on Land, Sea & in the Air.

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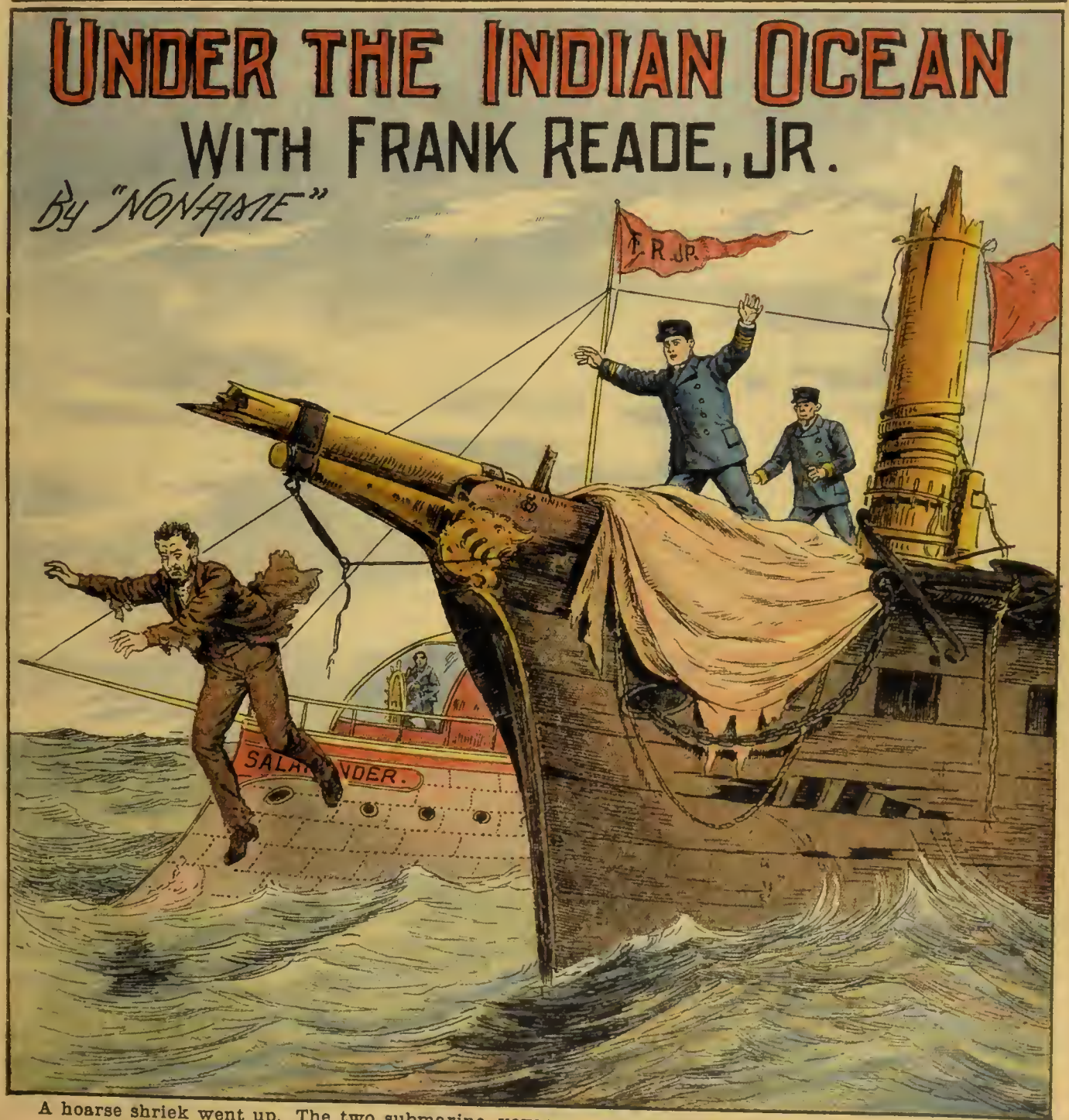
No. 77. NEW YORK, APRIL 15, 1904. Price 5 Cents.

UNDER THE INDIAN OCEAN

WITH FRANK READE, JR.

By "NONAME"



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(Continued on page 3 of cover.)

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CHAPTER I.

THE NEW BOAT—HOW POMP IS OUTWITTED.

Deep down among picturesque hills and upon a river leading down to the sea is the little city of Readestown.

It was noted as the home of the world's greatest inventor and traveler, Frank Reade, who perfected many wonders of that day.

But in the natural course of events his span of life terminated, and he was succeeded by his son, Frank Reade, Jr., a handsome, brainy youth, well qualified to follow in his father's footsteps.

And how he did so with great credit the world knows.

Electricity came along just in season to afford the young inventor the necessary economic motive power for his new inventions. He developed the Electric Boat, the Electric Coach, the wonderful Electric Air-Ship, and finally conquered the mighty problem of submarine navigation.

This held the people spellbound. When the report went forth that Frank Reade, Jr., had actually and successfully constructed a submarine boat, the whole country was agog.

He was besieged with reporters and sight-seers and overwhelmed with letters from all sorts of cranks, who had favorite projects for recovering lost treasure at the bottom of the sea.

But Frank disregarded all these and gave strict orders that no one was to be admitted to the machine works without an order personally signed by him.

What his plans were, Frank would divulge to no one; but there was one smart fellow who finally succeeded in breaking through the barrier and actually gained a view of the new boat.

In Frank's employ were a negro and an Irishman.

The former was named Pomp and the latter was Barney O'Shea. Both were much devoted to Frank.

Pomp was stationed at the outer gate with strict orders not to allow anybody to pass. Barney O'Shea was in charge of the inner yard.

The man who could get past these two shrewd watch dogs must be smart indeed. They were constantly on the watch.

But it was done and by a countryman, too.

One day a curious-looking individual walked slouchily along the sidewalk to the gate and paused right in front of

it. He stood with his hands under the tails of his long dun-colored coat.

He seemed intently interested in the arch of the gateway and regarded it fixedly, while his cadaverous jaws worked lustily on a big "chaw" of tobacco.

He was tall and lanky, with thick cowhide boots and jean trousers. His coat was of the old swallow-tail pattern with huge horn buttons.

A tuft of sandy whiskers adorned his chin and an antique bushy hat surmounted his head.

His cast of features were fox-like and his eyes intensely blue and keen. He was a type of man noticeable in any large crowd or locality.

Pomp, who stood immovable in the gateway, regarded him a moment with wide-open eyes and then scratched his woolly head.

"Golly! dat am de curusest lookin' man I eber seed. Done reckin he am a s'picions karakter. Jes' beliebe I bettah mek him move on. Might splode de hull place wif dynamite. Hey dar, yo' fellah, dis amn't no place fo' cranks or loonatics, an' yo' might jes' go on a bit furder. Yo' hear wha' I say?"

Pomp flourished his club and displayed the badge of a special policeman.

The curious-looking stranger only fixed his keen eyes on the darky and grinned.

Then he drew slowly from his pocket a stick of soft pine wood and a keen jack knife. He sliced off several shavings from the wood and remarked:

"I've heern tell about niggers, an' I've heern tell about colored men. Thar's a heap uv diffrunce, as I reckin, an' as nigh as I kin see without lookin' cross-eyed, yew are a colored man."

"I'se a cullud gemman, sah," replied Pomp with dignity. "I hope yo' don' mean to insinovate any insult, sah?"

"Yew bet I know ther diffrunce, fer I fit in ther war of ther rebellion to free ther colored man. I wuz allus a great friend of ther colored man, but I'll be condemned if I don't hate a nigger. Naow a colored man allus treats me perlite, an' I kin allus sell 'em a puzzle, made while yew wait—see?"

The stick of soft pine in the Yankee's hand had already begun to undergo a rapid transformation.

A few dexterous, swift strokes, and it resolved itself into a curious little jumping-jack and a ring.

"Naow the trick," resumed the Yankee, "it is tew make the monkey jump through ther ring. It kin be done as easy as breakin' sticks if you only knew ther trick. Naow I'll sell yew ther monkey, ther ring an' show yew haow tew d it an' fool yure friends fer only half a dollar."

Pomp's conceit was tickled by the Yankee's complimentary allusions to the colored race, and a certain magnetism about the stranger as well as a curious interest in the puzzle, drew him nearer.

"Dat am quaite a trick, amn't it," he said, in a patronizing way. "Bress yo' soul, sah, I don't see how yo' made it so quick."

"Thet's my trade, yew see. Try an' see if yew kin put the monkey through ther ring. If yew din do it without my telling yew haow, I'll make yew a present of this genuine gold ring."

The Yankee balanced a hoop of gold on his finger. This almost instantly excited Pomp's cupidity.

His eyes shone like stars.

"Does yo' mean dat?" he cried.

"I dew, an' yew kin see me dew ther trick, tew."

With which the Yankee made the monkey hop deftly through the ring.

"Huh! dat am easy enuff!" cried the darky. "Yo' kin jes' turn ober dat gold ring to me!"

"If yew kin dew it," said the Yankee, smoothly, "naow thet'll give yew suthin' tew dew tew kill time. I'm goin' round ther corner here tew sell a couple. When I cum back if yew hev it done I'll give yew ther puzzle. If yew don't hev it done, yew must pay me fifty cents fer it."

"I'll go yo', chile!" agreed Pomp, becoming absorbed in the puzzle, while the Yankee turned the corner, but not the corner of the street. Instead, he walked coolly through the gateway into the machine shop yard.

Now, Barney was in the yard, but as it happened, he was filling his pipe with his back turned to the gate.

While the smoke was obscuring his eye-sight, the Yankee had passed him, and as Barney turned his face once more to the gate, the Yankee was behind him.

Very coolly and unconcerned the puzzle maker turned a corner of the machine shop. Some workmen were puddling steel. They regarded him curiously, but said nothing, for they naturally inferred that he must be a privileged character, else he could never have gained admittance to the yard.

Beyond the machine shop was the tank or basin in which floated the submarine boat, all completed.

This artificial basin of water was fully forty feet deep, and connected by a lock with a canal which led down to the river.

The Yankee paused a moment and regarded the new invention critically as it lay in the water.

Then a light of admiration shone in his keen blue eyes.

Well, I swan!" he muttered; "thet is a beauty and no mistake! I'll be durned if I ain't goin' tew take a look over her."

And he advanced boldly to the gangplank which led aboard the submarine boat.

As it chanced, no workmen were in the yard, and he met with no interference whatever.

As the boat lay in the water she was seen to be a symmetrical craft upon the lines of a sloop with a sharp bow and a ram.

Her hull was of steel. Her two masts were of the same material and designed more to steady the boat than for actual service.

The deck of the Salamander, which was the name of the boat, was guarded by a brass rail running from stem to stern. Above the deck rose the main cabin, which was surmounted by three domes or observation towers with roofs of heavy plate glass and windows of the same.

The observation windows in the cabin were of great size, and one in the cabin could see with ease in all directions.

The forward dome was used also as a pilot-house. So much for the exterior of the boat.

The Yankee took this all in with a critical eye.

Then he crossed the plank to the deck and coolly entered the cabin of the Salamander.

He stood for a moment enraptured by the spectacle before him.

The cabin of the Salamander was furnished as richly as the drawing room of a millionaire.

Everything was costly and in good taste: there were rich tapestries, costly upholstery and bric-a-brac.

But the Yankee passed beyond this into the compartments beyond.

There was a handsome little dining salon, a lounging room and a salle-des-arms or armory room. Here there were stands of small arms and cases of ammunition.

Beyond this, one came to the staterooms, and then the stairs leading down into the hold where was the engine room and the storage room for supplies.

The Yankee inspected the electric engines critically; they were marvelous in their finish and complexity.

They were operated by a system of storage and dynamos, the secret of the young inventor. This he would not divulge to any one.

Leaving the engine room after a critical examination, the Yankee went aft to the great tank, which was the means of raising or lowering the boat.

When it was desired to sink the boat water was instantly admitted. When it was desired to raise the boat, all that was necessary was to press a pneumatic tube, which caused the walls of the tank to slide together under the pressure of great springs, when the water was expelled and the boat made buoyant.

Next the Yankee ascended to the observation towers.

These were reached by little spiral staircases from the cabin.

They were exquisitely arranged, and the view from them was fine. Next the visitor descended to the main deck.

As he stepped out of the cabin he stood for a moment contemplating the gateway leading into the canal.

And as he stood there he was seen by a tall, athletic young man, who had just crossed the gangplank.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Frank Reade, Jr., for it was he. "Who on earth is this, and how did he get in here? I would much like to know."

CHAPTER II.

ANANIAS TELLS HIS STORY.

For a moment Frank Reade, Jr., could hardly believe his senses.

He stood in a state of stupefaction gazing at the intruder. How did he get there, and who was he?

"Certainly there is something wrong," thought Frank. "Pomp never let him in. Well, I never!"

But it was enough for him to know that a mean sneaking trick had been practiced upon him. An outsider had daringly stolen into these forbidden parts and he should be dealt with summarily for his trespass.

So Frank in hot anger strode up to the intruder and gave him a smart slap on the shoulder.

"Hey, you!" he cried angrily, "what right have you here? Who are you?"

The Yankee turned with a start and faced Frank with an astute and yet wild light in his eyes.

"Haow dew yew dew?" he said, in a nasal voice. "Nice boat yew hev got here, ain't it?"

Frank was almost choking with his anger. He felt like choking the impudent invader.

"Well—I—confound your insolence! What do you want here?"

"Nuthin', my friend, nuthin'," replied the Yankee in a matter-of-fact way, "thet is I've got all I wanted."

"You impudent scoundrel! Who gave you permission to come in here?"

"Hey? Nobody, I reckin!"

"Well, then, how came you here?"

"I walked in."

"You walked in?"

"Yas!"

"Not through the big gate?"

"Jes' so!"

"Well, I never!" gasped Frank. "Was there not a colored man there?"

"I reckin ther wuz!"

"And he let you walk in?"

"Wall, he didn't say nuthin' agin it, though he warn't lookin' my way. But let's talk sense, my friend. Air yew ther man what owns this boat?"

"I am," replied Frank, in a somewhat dazed state of mind.

"Wall, then, yure jest ther man I wanted tew see. Durn my hat, I'm glad tew meet yew!"

The Yankee held out his hand.

Frank took it mechanically.

Something in the personality of this man impressed him. The Yankee pulled out a piece of pasteboard and said:

"I reckin yew'd like my name. I'm Ananias Kedge, of Brickport, Maine, when I'm at hum. Jes' naow my hum is everywhar thet my business calls me."

"And your business——"

"I'm a private detective."

Frank was now more than ever convinced that he had to do with a dangerous maniac or crank. While he was frantically trying to hit upon a course of action, Ananias Kedge placed a document in his hands and displayed a small gold star upon his breast.

"Thet paper is my certificate of membership in ther Brotherhood of Detectives," he said. "An' this ar badge proves me a member of the U. S. Secret Service. I'm all wool an' a yard wide, cap'n. Thet's straight talk."

Kedge spoke earnestly, and so substantial was his proof of identity that Frank's face lit up.

"On my word, Mr. Kedge," he said, "you will pardon me, but I thought you might be some dangerous crank, many of whom try daily to get into this place."

Kedge sneezed and then laughed in a nasal way.

"Dew tell! Wall, naow, I'm a long ways from bein' a crank, I kin tell yew, though I'm likely tew dew queer things when I git started. But I owe it to yew tew tell haow I got inter this place, an' yer nigger at ther gate warn't tew blame nuther."

With which Ananias proceeded to detail his experience with Pomp.

In spite of himself Frank could not help a laugh.

"Well, Mr. Ananias Kedge!" he cried, "I hope your name belies you. You can safely claim to be the only man outside these works who has seen the submarine boat. Now that you have seen it I hope you are satisfied."

"Not quite, my friend," said the Yankee detective laconically. "I hev tew make yew an apology fer trespassin' hyar, but I hed a good purpose in view, an' I kin tell yew somethin' of importance if we kin go somewhar whar we kin be in private."

"Come this way," said Frank.

He led the way into a private office in the main building of the machine works. He sat down at a table and the detective sat opposite.

Frank half expected that the detective was about to expose to him some deadly plot against the submarine boat, or possibly himself. Indeed, he fancied that Kedge was here for that very purpose of shadowing some crank who meant harm to him.

But he was to learn that the errand of Kedge was based upon a far different matter.

The Yankee took a fresh chew of tobacco, and then said:

"Fust off, I'll tell yew what brought me here. I seen an account of yew in a New York paper, an' of a new submarine boat yew hed built. Thet interested me. I wouldn't believe the story until I hed cum hyar an' seen ther boat with my own eyes. I kin say thet I believe it naow."

"Indeed," said Frank.

"Naow, for twenty years I hev been on a mighty big murder case. I reckin yew don't recollect ther great Bainbridge murder about twenty years ago?"

"Indeed I do," said Frank. "At least I have heard of it."

"Wall, thet ere was the deepest case of crime ever known in this kentry. Samuel Bainbridge was a rich banker in New York. One night he wuz murdered in his own house. Every detective in ther United States wuz on ther case. His brother Albert offered a reward of one hundred thousand dollars fer ther apprehension of ther murderer.

"Now Drake Coleman, his private secretary, turned up missing. Ther murder wuz of course laid at his door until ther bloody knife and a suit of clothes identified as his, also covered with blood, wuz found in Albert Bainbridge's room.

"The brother wuz arrested, tried on circumstantial evidence and found guilty. The disappearance of Coleman seemed tew implicate him, but it proved nothing.

"Naow, ther wuz a great division of 'pinyun on ther matter. Some claimed as haow Bainbridge wuz innocent, an' thet ther murderer hed put ther job onto him, an' others contended thet Bainbridge killed his brother an' offered ther

hundred thousan' reward as a bluff. Fer twenty years Albert Bainbridge has bin in prison fer a life sentence.

"Naow, Mister Reade, atwixt yew an' me, Al Bainbridge wuz innocent. I tracked thet durned sarpint of a private secretary tew San Francisco, an' he shipped aboard ther Pacific mail steamer Oriental fer Hongkong. Thet ship never wuz heerd of after leavin' port.

"Naow, Drake Coleman hed ther evidence tew clear Al Bainbridge, an' he an' thet steamer Oriental are at ther bottom of ther Pacific somewhar."

Frank was intensely interested. He began to see the detective's purpose.

Kedge cleared his throat and went on.

"Naow murder will most always out. I hev allus felt dead sure thet thet evidence would yit cum up out of ther Pacific. So when I read about yew an' yure electric submarine boat it cum over me like a flash. Sez I, 'If thet is a bony-fide thing, it will do ther trick; it will be easy enuff tew find ther wreck of ther Oriental, an' mebbe git Drake Coleman's body or skeleton, an' mebbe his effects, an' suthin' among them will tell ther truth of ther thing fer a dead surety.' An' thet's what I'm sneakin' around here to-day fer, Mr. Reade. Am I right or am I wrong? Air yew wid me or air yew agin me?"

Frank did not reply for some moments. He gazed steadily at the Yankee detective.

Finally he said:

"I am deeply interested in your story, Mr. Kedge."

"Wall," snorted the Yankee, "is thet all yew hev tew say?"

"You want my help?"

"Jes' so."

"But how can I help you?"

"Ain't yew got a boat thet kin travel anywheres under ther sea?"

"Yes!"

"Wall, then, jes' take me on board with yew an' look fer ther wreck of ther Oriental. If we kin find thet evidence on board her we kin release from a livin' death an innocent man. Ain't thet enuff!"

Frank rose to his feet.

"It is," he said in a resolute voice, "if it is within human power we will find that evidence, Mr. Kedge. I am not 'agin' you. I am wholly and truly 'wid' you."

"Hooray!" shouted the detective. "Won't Sal Hickey, my best gal up in Varmont, be glad tew hear of thet. Te tum—te tum—te tiddy tum!"

And in his ecstasy the Yankee pulled out a Jewsharp and twanged a lusty ditty upon it.

The matter was settled.

Frank Reade, Jr.'s submarine craft had now an important object attached to it, and to him the interest was thereby greatly enhanced.

CHAPTER III.

AN IMPORTANT LETTER—THE WRECK.

In spite of all precautions the object of the submarine voyage leaked out.

The newspapers, those purveyors of gossip, took it up, and exciting accounts were given.

To Frank Reade, Jr., this was most amazing, but in one case, however, this proved of benefit incalculable. This was how it came about.

The publicity given it by the newspapers called the affair to the attention of a retired mariner, Captain Layeross, of the ship Ventura.

The result was that Frank received a letter from the old skipper which was of the greatest importance, inasmuch as it completely changed all plans.

Frank at once sent for Ananias Kedge, who came at once. Frank handed him the letter.

Kedge read it as follows:

"San Francisco, June 30, 18—

"Mr. Reade:

"I have been much interested in your project of sailing under the Pacific in quest of the wreck of the Oriental with your submarine boat.

"Now I think your scheme a good one, and after my own heart, and if I were a bit younger I would be with you. But first off, don't look for the Oriental under the Pacific.

"For she is not there.

"I was at Hongkong with my ship Ventura when the Oriental came in. The party you are after was aboard her and left that port aboard her.

"For she left Hongkong within the month and sailed south by west for the Indian Ocean and Mozambique. We were consort with her through the Straits of Malaysia.

"I know that she foundered in the Indian Ocean, for her only survivor, an old foretopman named Jerry Crabtree, came aboard of us at Zanzibar and told us of it.

"She foundered in a typhoon somewhere south of the Chagas Islands, in latitude 10 degrees south by longitude 70 degrees east. Crabtree died at Ilo Ilo of the breakbone

fever. Look for the Oriental in about this locality and you will be sure to find her.

"With my best wishes for your success, I am yours in friendship.

SAM LAYCROSS,
"Master of the Ship Ventura."

For a moment the Yankee detective was too full for utterance.

"Wall, I'll be hornswaggled!" he gasped, "thet is a gol durned big streak of luck fer us. Why, we might have been lookin' fer ten years in ther Pacific. I never looked fer this."

"I should say it was luck," said Frank; "it fairly establishes the exact resting place of the Oriental. We shall know quite well now where to look for her."

"Yew kin bet yer cucumbers! Ther Injun Ocean, eh? Thet beats Sary Ann's bed quilt! All right. I reckin we won't waste much time in ther Pacific then."

"Indeed, no!" replied Frank: "it will not be necessary to go so far as the Pacific. Instead of sailing around Cape Horn we will strike across the South Atlantic to the Cape of Good Hope. Thence north through the channel of Mozambique and then eastward on the tenth parallel to the 70th meridian."

"Quite a change in our plans, by gosh!" exclaimed Ananias.

"You are right."

A letter of thanks was at once sent to the obliging Captain Laycross. And thus was the projected trip of the submarine boat changed from under the Pacific to under the Indian Ocean.

However, this necessitated no other change of plans and soon all was in readiness.

Barney and Pomp had worked hard to have the Salamander well equipped and she was certainly in fine trim.

One day the voyagers stepped aboard and the Salamander drifted out into the canal.

Thence to the river was not far, and once in the current the voyage was well begun.

Of course a great throng of people were gathered to see her off. Bands played and guns were fired.

The Salamander moved away down the river current like a swallow in its flight.

It was not a long sail to the sea, and when at last she crossed the bar and was in the heaving billows, all felt that the voyage had well begun.

Frank was in the pilot-house.

Of course, a trial of the boat had been made in the tank. But he now proceeded to make a thorough test in the depths of old ocean.

This proved satisfactory.

She was sent to the bottom in one hundred fathoms. Also she sailed under water at various depths and different degrees of speed.

In every way she proved all that Frank could expect. She was in every sense a perfect submarine boat.

"Wall," said Ananias, sententiously, "I dew believe yew are ther smartest man in this kentry to-day. I never heern tell of yure likes."

Frank laughed.

"I fear you give me too much credit," he said. "I do not altogether deserve it."

"Wall, if yew don't, nobody does. I'll gamble dollars tew peanuts on yew every time."

"Golly, I done tink dere ain't but jes' one Marse Frank Reade, Jr.," cried Pomp. "He am de boss!"

"Begorra, thet's roight!" chimed in Barney.

Frank felt a bit flustered with such compliments, the sincerity of which he could not doubt.

The Salamander was allowed to sail on the surface, for it was believed that she could go faster than beneath the waves.

And rapid progress was made to the southward.

Vessels were passed, and at times hailed. In all cases the skippers were astonished at sight of the Salamander.

Many of them regarded it as a war vessel of some sort, and some avoided it with a curious timidity, which made our voyagers laugh.

The days passed without serious incident, until one day Frank said:

"We are now exactly upon the Tropic of Cancer, and due east from Havana."

"By Jemima, yew don't say!" cried Ananias. "I reckin we ain't a plaguey ways from the Equator."

"About half way," declared Frank.

"Haow yew talk. I'll be durned glad when we git over that line."

"Well, so shall I," agreed Frank. "A good part of our journey will have been accomplished."

The submarine boat was cleaving the waves steadily on her southward way. Pomp chanced to be in the pilot-house, and suddenly espied an object distant about a mile on the weather bow.

"Golly!" he muttered, "I wondah what dat am?"

He picked up a binocular near and studied the object closely. It seem to be at that range a projecting reef of rock.

At that moment it was spied by the others.

"A drifting wreck!" cried Frank.

Instantly all became excitement, for Ananias declared that he could see a signal of distress flying from her hulk.

At once Frank put the Salamander on a course toward her. As they drew nearer a white flag was plainly seen.

That somebody was on the wreck seemed almost certain. Rapidly the submarine boat drew nearer.

But though all closely scrutinized the wreck, not a single human being was to be seen.

"Mercy!" exclaimed Frank, with a thrill of horror. "Are we too late? Have they all died of starvation?"

"Wall, I'll be durned!" muttered the Yankee detective; "it sartinly looks thet way."

"Begorra, Misther Frank," cried Barney, "there's only one way that I know of to foind ont, an' that is to go on board av her."

"All right!" cried Frank; "run the Salamander alongside!"

This was accordingly done. A rope was thrown over the rail of the wreck, and the two crafts were drawn closely together.

It was seen that the wreck was a brig of heavy burden, and had evidently been engaged in trade along the South American coast.

She was an American vessel, as a tattered remnant of a flag showed. Frank and Kedge vaulted over the rail and stood on her deck.

It was strewn with wreckage and presented the appearance that one might have expected under the circumstances. But the voyagers were looking for a sign of human life.

"On my word I believe the hulk is deserted," said Frank.

"Wall, I reckon not," said the Yankee abruptly. "What kew yew call thet?"

Kedge pointed down the companionway of the vessel. Frank gave a violent start.

A man was just coming up out of the cabin.

His face was pallid and his gaze lacked luster. He gave a start at sight of the newcomers.

He was a man of tall and slender frame, a handsome cast of features, and was evidently one accustomed to a life of ease and luxury. But his clothes were now torn and bedraggled and his attitude that of one who had suffered a great blow.

He started forward eagerly at sight of the newcomers. He rushed up to Frank with a momentary flash in his saddened eyes.

"You have come to save us. God sent you. I knew he would. You are just in time."

"Indeed, we are willing to serve you all in our power!" cried Frank.

"God bless you! But 'sh! she sleeps. Come—come quickly, but tread lightly."

With which he went stealthily down the stairs. Frank and the Yankee exchanged glances, then they followed him.

Down into the cabin they went. The castaway led the others to a bunk in which reclined a human form.

Frank and Kedge gave a violent start. Neither were prepared for the sight which they beheld.

The upturned features of a young girl transcendently beautiful were there. They were cameo-like in their regularity, but the waxy appearance and the mobility of expression was unmistakable.

Death held them enthralled. She was fair to gaze upon, but yet a corpse.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STORM.

Tenderly, reverently the castaway pointed to the dead girl. Frank and Kedge were spellbound.

"You see," said the castaway, with a hollow sound in his throat, "we are all ready to go with you across the great river. But I beg of you do not separate us on the other side!"

Frank looked into the castaway's eyes.

One glance was enough.

He saw that all reason had long since fled. He was a madman. It was a pitiable scene.

"My soul!" he whispered to Kedge, "the fellow is insane."

"I reckin!" agreed the Yankee; "it's a hard case. But what air we goin' tew dew with him?"

This was a puzzle.

Frank had it not in his heart to sail away and leave the poor wretch to perish on board the drifting wreck.

And yet he had no idea that he could be persuaded to leave the dead girl who had no doubt been his heart's idol in life.

After some thought he approached the insane man and began to talk quietly and softly with him.

He endeavored to explain to him logically that the girl was beyond earthly aid, and that it were better to become reconciled. But the madman evidently would not believe this.

"Dead!" he said, with a jeering laugh. "My Alferetta dead? Never! You knew her not. She would not leave me, for she has sworn to love me and never leave me!"

Then he bent down over the corpse.

"Is it not true, Alferetta?" he cried passionately. "Our lives are one forever and aye! We shall never be separated! Refute their statements!"

No word came from the dead girl's lips.

He repeated his wild question again and again in a frantic manner.

Finally, unable longer to bear the strain, an insane freak seized him. He turned with a shriek.

"You have turned her against me!" he cried wildly. "You, curses on you for interlopers! You have turned her love from me! Ha! I will have sweet revenge for this! The cock crows! The eleventh hour has come, and you die—curses on you, die!"

With a wild shriek he flung himself upon Kedge. But the detective forced him back and the maniac next sprang for the stairs.

Up to the deck he went cat-like, raving and foaming at the mouth like a rabid dog. His shrieks were terrifying to hear.

"Follow him!" cried Frank, nervously, "he is apt to do himself some harm."

"Yew bet!" gritted Kedge. "Lordy! ther wust has come!"

Even as they reached the deck they saw the madman far out on the shattered bowsprit.

He was holding out his hands and crying as he walked toward the end of the bowsprit.

"Wait, gentle Alferetta. Wait for me. I come—I come to you! Ah!"

A hoarse shriek went up. The two submarine voyagers sprang forward. But they were too late.

The poor wretch went down into a seething cauldron of waters. He did not rise again.

The story of the wreck and the fate of the crew was never further known than this.

Saddened by the affair, Frank and the Yankee detective returned to the deck of the Salamander.

Speed was at once put on, and the floating wreck left out of sight.

"Let us linger no longer on the Tropic of Cancer!" cried Frank. "Ugh! that matter will haunt me in my sleep for many a day."

But the Salamander had not run a dozen miles when all noticed a yellow cloud rising out of the sea.

The air was insufferably hot. It required but a glance for Frank to read the truth.

"We are going to have a tornado," he said. "It will be a terrific one, too, I predict."

"Jemina!" exclaimed the Yankee detective, "thet's bad, an' ther ain't no harbor for us to put into."

"There is little need for that," said Frank, with a laugh.

"Eh?" exclaimed Kedge in surprise. "Ain't this ere boat as likely to go to ther bottom as any?"

"More likely," said Frank; "and that is where she is going to go."

The detective saw the point at once and laughed.

"Yew hev beat me!" he cried. "I see ther point. We needn't be ther least bit afeared of ther storm."

"Not a bit," said Frank, "but I should like to see it come on."

"So shed I."

So the voyagers watched the approach of the tornado, which was a sight well worth seeing.

Higher rose the cloud, and the sea relapsed into a dead calm.

The sea and sky became a brassy color. The sun was hid in a dull haze.

Intently the voyagers watched the phenomenon.

"I pity any vessel caught out in this blow," said Frank. "It will be bad for her."

"I don't see any sort of craft around anywheres," declared Ananias. "I reckon it's lucky."

"Yes, indeed," agreed Frank. "Oh, look at that."

The sight which claimed the attention of all now was a singular one.

Far out on the horizon, the sea and sky seemed to have lowered to meet each other, and they were separated only by what looked like a supporting pillar.

This pillar changed its position, and momentarily grew larger. It required but a single glance for Frank to understand it.

"It is a water-spout," he said, "woe to any vessel which gets into its grip."

"By jimeracks, it's a makin' fer us!" cried Kedge.

This seemed indeed a fact.

The water-spout was bearing down with all speed directly for the spot where the submarine boat was.

But Frank, with practiced eye, saw that no harm could come to them.

It was too large and must break before it could reach them. And just at that moment it did break.

There was a terrific upheaval of the sea, a fearful commotion, and a great tidal wave ran off to the eastward. But hardly a ripple reached the spot where the Salamander lay in a calm.

But now the calm began to break

A faint breeze ran litfully across the livid sea. Then a dull, moaning sound came from the sky.

"It is coming," said Frank, placing his hand on the tank lever, "take it in while you can."

The scene then depicted was one never to be forgotten.

A white wall appeared on the horizon. It looked like a fringe of white crystal, but Frank declared:

"That is a tidal wave or wall of water fully fifty feet high. It will moderate before it gets here, but it will bring the storm with it."

His prediction was verified.

Nearer with terrific speed came the wall of water. The sky was now black, and the wind roared like a thousand furies.

Then all became commotion. Frank pressed the lever none too soon. Down went the Salamander.

For a moment all was Stygian gloom. Then Frank pressed a button and the electric lights made all like day.

They were now several hundred feet from the surface. The fury of the storm was not felt here.

Frank watched the outside barometer in its fluctuations, but it was fully an hour before he said:

"The tornado is past; no doubt we will find the sea rough, but the danger is over."

"Shall we go tew ther surface?" asked Kedge.

"No," replied Frank, "I think not yet. We will travel under water a few hours. Ah! is not that the bottom?"

"By ther Jeems Rice, it is!" cried Kedge eagerly. "Great apple trees! What a sight thet is!"

Indeed it was a strange and wild scene spread to the view of the submarine voyagers.

The bottom of the Atlantic in those latitudes was strangely diversified with reef and valley, marine growth and life.

There were forests of mighty submarine plants, mountains of slimy rock, deep chasms and dark recesses, in which lurked strange sea monsters which had probably never seen the light of day.

All this and much more beyond description passed in panorama before the voyagers.

"Begorra, av there were as many quare crathers on the earth small chance there'd be fer human beings," said Barney.

"Golly! it am lucky dat we lib on de land," averred Pomp.

"Huh! dey would niver touch the loikes av yez down there," scoffed Barney. "Shure that shmoile av yures wud settle thim."

"Wha's dat yo' say, sah?" cried Pomp, angrily. "Does yo' mean to insult me, sah?"

"Av yez want to take it that way yez kin," said Barney, coolly.

Pomp glared at the Celt. The two were the warmest of friends, but insatiably fond of hectoring each other.

They invariably terminated their squabbles in a rough and tumble fight, out of which they generally emerged with honors even.

"Yo' hab been pooty sassy to me, sah, fo' somewhile," said Pomp, severely. "Now, I jes' gib yo' a pointer to be moh perlite to yer s'perior."

"Phat's that?" roared Barney. "I'll niver allow any naygurs to call thimsilves superior to me, sor. Yez will turn thet about or be me sowl I'll turn it about fer yez."

"Dat am de only way yo' kin prove de question ob s'periority," said Pomp, coolly. "I am jes' ready fo' yo' any time yo' am ready fo' me."

"Thin take that!" cried Barney.

He made a biff at Pomp.

The latter dodged it, however, and then lowered his head like a mad bull.

"Look out dar fo' I'se comin'," he yelled. "Clar de track, fo' I'll suttinly be wif you'!"

The next moment he drove his woolly head full force into Barney's abdomen.

CHAPTER V.

UNDER THE INDIAN OCEAN.

It need hardly be said that all the argument was taken out of the Celt for a few moments.

He sat down so hard that he literally saw stars. It was some seconds before he recovered his breath.

On the other hand, Pomp had not got much the best of the bargain.

The darky's foot had slipped on some object and he went sprawling across the cabin floor beyond Barney.

As it chanced there was a cooler of water upon a stand in that corner of the cabin.

This was upset and descended full upon the darky's neck, giving him a cold shower bath.

He scrambled to his feet, gasping and sputtering:

"Golly! Wha' de debbil wuz dat? Done fought it wuz a snake," he gasped; "fo' de lan' sake luk at dat I'ishman!"

And Pomp burst into roars of laughter at the comical

spectacle presented by Barney, who was vainly endeavoring to catch his breath.

When the Celt did recover himself he was the maddest man under the sea at least.

He recovered his breath in gasps, and roared spasmodically:

"Be me sowl—yez black ape—I'll—er—goo—er—I'll have the loife av yez fer this, yez blundherin', low-down naygur! Whurroo!"

Barney started for Pomp, who just turned and rolled down the stairs into the storeroom.

This had a door with thick glass panels. Pomp closed and barred it behind him.

He was safe and had much the best of the situation, for he could make up faces at the belligerent Barney and defy him.

And while Barney was vainly endeavoring to get at his colleague Frank's voice from above put an end to the affair.

The submarine boat after some hours returned to the surface, as greater speed could be maintained there.

No incident worthy of note occurred during the journey from there to the Equator.

Thence to the Cape of Good Hope the run was made comparatively quick.

When this southernmost point of the African continent had been rounded Frank said with much satisfaction:

"We are progressing rapidly. So far our trip is a success. Now through the Mozambique Channel, and then we'll go into the Indian Ocean. We are bound to win success."

"By gosh, thet's ther way tew talk!" cried Ananias, excitedly. "I like thet fust rate."

The feat of looking for a vessel sunken many years was of course not an easy one to contemplate or execute.

It was possible that the wreck had ere this changed its position so that it might be a dozen or more feet buried in shifting sands.

Or the action of the sea and its myriad of habitants might have completely wiped it out of existence.

There were all these chances against the successful carrying out of the project.

Again it was no easy matter in the vast waste of the Indian Ocean, to locate exactly the sunken ship.

A year might be consumed in the quest, and then not be rewarded with success.

But Frank knew this well, and had counted all carefully. Of course, he knew that it was possible to fail, but he was determined to win if he could.

Straight up the Mozambique Channel the submarine boat stood.

A regular rate of speed was kept up, and it was not long before the northern point of the Island of Madagascar was rounded.

It was a beautiful warm day when the Salamander finally sailed into the becalmed waters of the Indian Ocean.

This, the most wonderful body of salt water on the globe, was almost always mirror-like in its expanse.

For this reason it was a long voyage always for sailing craft across the Indian Ocean.

Its changeable currents and terrible storms were the terror of the mariner the world over. Sometimes for a week a ship would lie becalmed, and then be caught up in a terrible typhoon, which would send her to the bottom.

But the submarine voyagers had nothing of this sort to fear.

Though it could be readily understood how the Oriental had gone to her untimely fate.

The Salamander's course was set due across the Indian Ocean from here.

Frank decided to go at once to the bottom of the sea, saying for an excuse:

"I want to be able to say that I have sailed under the Indian Ocean for some hundred miles, anyway. Prepare for some wonderful sights."

"Begorra, that's roight, Misther Frank!" cried Barney. "Mebbe we will see the say serpent or the whale that swallowed Jonah!"

"Huh!" put in Pomp. "Yo' ought to know bettah dan dat. Yo' won't fin' dat whale undah de Injun Ocean."

"An' phwy not, might I ax yez, Misther Know-It-All?" asked Barney.

"Yo' ain' no business wif me on de histry question!" sniffed Pomp; "dere ain' no whale in de Injun Ocean. He was in de Red Sea!"

"Haw—haw—haw!" roared Ananias. "Yew air a pooty pair of scholards, yew air. Naow cum tew yer uncle an' he'll tell yew jest haow it wuz. Yew see ther whale kain't be in ther Red Sea, fer ther Garden uv Eden is at ther North Pole all covered with ice. Haw—haw—haw! Yew air a pooty pair!"

"Golly! I don't beliebe dat," sniffed Pomp; "don' say nuffin' in de Bible about dere bein' ice in de Garden ob Eden, nor about Adam and Eve goin' skatin'."

"Begorra, nayther av yez knows anythin' at all about it!" cried Barney, with conviction. "Ivery wan knows that the Garden av Eden was in Cintral Afriky, at the source av the Noile River. I'll lave it to Misther Frank, an' I'll sthand treat if he don't tell yez the same."

"I don't know but that you have stuck me," laughed

Frank. "Some traditions affirm that the Dead Sea covers what was the original Garden of our antediluvian ancestors. But the point of controversy between you as I understand it, concerned Jonah and the whale. Now Jonah and the whale are very much antedated by the Garden of Eden."

"Whurro!" cried Barney. "I towld yez all, that yez didn't know phwat yez war talkin' about."

"Wall," growled Ananias. "I don't believe thet eny on us know too much about it, anyway. Thet wuz a good while afore eny reckerlection of mine."

All laughed at this and the matter was dropped.

No fear of a whale or a sea serpent, however, deterred Frank Reade, Jr., from sinking the submarine boat to the bottom of the Indian Ocean.

Down went the Salamander, and after descending what seemed like an interminable distance, Barney, who was in the pilot-house, cried:

"We're within tin yards av the bottom, sor, an' no obstruction. Is that all roight, sor?"

"Rest the boat on the bottom if it is safe and practicable!" cried Frank.

"All roight, sor!"

The bed of the sea here was all a vast waste of sand, white and drifting. There was little growth of sea weed, and few objects to interfere with a safe landing.

So the submarine boat descended and rested on the sand. Then the searchlight was put at work.

Flashing it about in various directions, the same unbroken expanse was seen as far as the eye could reach.

"There!" cried the Yankee detective, "I reckon it's jest abaout sich a place as this whar we'll find ther Oriental!"

"Then we are apt not to find it," declared Frank.

"Why?"

"Easy enough. The sand will probably have buried it out of sight long ago."

Ananias' face fell.

"Dew yew believe thet?" he said, lugubriously. "Durn my hat, thet would be tew bad."

"It is possible, however, that the vessel struck a reef and yet lies in a few hundred fathoms on some ledge or coral bottom. We will hope for the best."

"Yew bet!" cried the Yankee sententiously. "I ain't ther one tew git a bit disconraged. Thar's nuthin' like hangin' right on."

The submarine boat did not rest very long in this place. Barney raised it about fifty feet from the bottom and proceeded at a fair rate of speed.

This sort of progress of course required considerable care and a constant outlook.

Dangerous looking reefs were passed over where it looked to be almost a certainty that the boat would strike.

But Barney's skillful hand at the steering board kept the boat always steady.

Strange species of fish, utterly unlike any they had yet seen, were encountered.

The waters and the marine life of the Indian Ocean were vastly different from that of the Atlantic, or any other sea through which they had yet passed.

Once they passed over hundreds of acres of level expanse of sand thickly studded with the rarest and most beautiful of shells.

Nothing the voyagers had ever seen equaled them.

Indeed, so beautiful were they that Frank cried:

"Hold on! I want to secure a few specimens of those. They are too wonderful to let go by."

"All roight, sor," cried Barney, as he slackened the speed of the Salamander.

Down the boat settled until the keel struck the sands. Then of a sudden Barney flashed his searchlight off at right angles.

A great cry burst from the lips of all.

"Great hemlocks!" burst forth Ananias, excitedly; "a sunken ship, an' who knows but thet it's ther Oriental? Durn my hat, let's find aout!"

Sure enough! Not two hundred yards from the spot where they were there was to be seen the sunken hull of a vessel.

Was it really the Oriental? If so, then a critical point in the voyage had arrived.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SUNKEN VESSEL.

Frank Reade, Jr., however, was by no means sanguine that the wreck was indeed that of the Oriental.

In the first place they were not anywhere near the latitude where the vessel was supposed to have been lost.

Again, even at that distance, his trained eye could see that the wreck was hardly of the tonnage necessary for a big ship like the Oriental.

But yet he was very willing to make a visit to the hulk.

Barney raised the Salamander once more and started for the wreck. For the time the rare shells were quite forgotten.

In a very few moments the Salamander had reached the

spot where the wreck lay. It descended within one hundred feet of it.

The sunken vessel lay partly on its side.

Time and the action of the sea had completely covered it with silt and drift so that its character could hardly be guessed.

"Wall," said Ananias, "naow ther question is, haow are we goin' tew git over thar?"

"Very easily," said Frank, coolly. "Pomp, bring up the diving helmets and reservoirs."

Pomp turned a flip flop and went tumbling down into the hold.

When he came back he had several curious-looking metal cases in his arms.

One of these was opened, and Frank took out a shining brass helmet and diver's suit.

But instead of the customary life line, there was a chemical generator the same as that which furnished air for the cabin of the Salamander.

This generator was carried on the diver's back, and was so arranged that a continual circuit of fresh air could be carried to the diver's nostrils.

It was a special invention of Frank's and exceedingly valuable. He had been offered large sums for the secret of the chemical composition.

But in every case he had refused to sell it.

Frank donned one of these diving suits. In it he knew that he could travel anywhere under the water and for a long period.

Barney helped the Yankee to don one of the suits, and then he put on one himself.

Pomp was to remain aboard the Salamander, and keep a lookout for any possible peril which might threaten the boat.

But the matter which now puzzled the Yankee was as to how they were going to leave the boat.

It would seem that to open a door and attempt to walk out would be fatal, for it would almost instantly flood the boat with water, and drown them all like rats in a trap.

But Frank Reade, Jr., was too thorough an inventor not to have provided for this point.

He had planned a vestibule with one door opening into the cabin, and the other on to the deck.

This vestibule was provided with pipes for instantly flooding it. By stepping into the vestibule it was an easy matter for the divers to close it off from the cabin and fill it with water.

Then the outer door could be safely opened, and they might pass out into the sea.

To return it was only necessary to reverse matters. The vestibule being closed from the deck, powerful pneumatic pressure forced the water from the vestibule, and made it safe for them to enter the cabin.

These were only a few of the wonderful and ingenious contrivances about the boat.

In this manner therefore the divers passed safely out into the sea. It was at first a curious sensation.

It seemed to the Yankee as if he was between the flanges of a vise and in danger of being jammed to a jelly.

But in a very few moments he overcame this, and felt quite at ease. Frank led the way.

Down from the deck of the submarine boat they clambered and stood on the bottom of the sea. Then Frank started for the wreck.

Each was armed with a hatchet, a line of rope, and a long, keen knife. It was well to go well equipped, as one never knew what moment they might need a weapon or some instrument of defense.

It did not take Frank long to cross the intervening space to the hull of the wreck.

The heavy leaden weights upon their feet which had seemed so cumbersome in the vestibule, were now only feather-like in weight to the divers.

Reaching the wreck, Frank began to clamber up the side of it. But suddenly the rotten planking gave way and he fell inward out of sight.

"Great Jemina! What has happened tew him?" yelled Ananias. "What are yew goin' tew dew, yew Irishman?"

Of course Barney could not hear this.

But the Celt knew from the detective's manner that he was saying something, so he placed his helmet close to the other and cried:

"Phwat's that yez say?"

Ananias heard him this time, and made reply:

"Whar has he gone? What has happened tew him?"

"Begorra, I don't know no more nor yez," cried Barney. "Shure, but it's toime to foind out."

"Durn my hat, but thet's what I'm goin' tew dew!" cried the Yankee.

With which he started to climb through the aperture, but Barney was already before him.

And the Celt saw a star-like gleam just below, which he knew came from the helmet of Frank Reade, Jr.

Then his feet went out from under him on some slimy substance, and he did not cease falling until he was by Frank's side, in that part of the vessel's hold next the keel.

The Yankee followed almost instantly. For a moment the three divers were stunned.

Then they put their helmets together, and Frank shouted:

"Well, we got here a little quicker than we expected."

"Ye're right," cried the Yankee; "durn my boots, but I thort I wuz slidin' tew kingdom cum."

"Begorra, I cudn't tell fer ther loife av me phwere I was goin'," averred Barney, "but, shure, Misther Frank, it's in ther hold av the ship that we be."

"Yes," agreed Frank, "and I am fearful that the rotting old hulk will tumble down all about us."

"Begorra, it wud bury us aloive!"

"Gee flinders!" exclaimed Ananias, "thet wouldn't dew fer me. I'm bound tew hev a funeral when I die."

But Frank had already begun to make his way toward a ladder near. It led up through a hatch probably to the main hold.

Fortunately, this being of iron was yet strong and bore the weight of the divers.

The planking in the interior of the ship seemed all sound and the three divers entered the hold safely.

By the glare of their helmet lights this was seen to be filled with casks and bales, evidently of supplies for the crew.

Frank put his helmet close to the Yankee's and shouted:

"Curious, is it not? This vessel don't seem to have carried any cargo."

"Maybe she wuz in some other line," replied the Yankee. "I wudn't be a durned bit surprised."

Frank knew what the Yankee meant, and replied:

"This is just about the right locality to look for pirate vessels. It may be that this was one."

"Jes' so," replied Ananias.

They passed through the hold, and Frank pointed to a number of large cases of Madeira. It was evident that the crew of this ship lived well.

That she had been a freebooter of the seas Frank felt quite sure. There was another iron ladder here leading to the deck above.

Here was clear proof that the vessel had not been a merchantman.

Chests and bundles of various material were here stored. They all indicated spoils taken from captured vessels.

Stairs led up to the berth deck, and here an astonishing scene was found. The deck was literally covered with whitening skeletons.

Their attitudes and the fact that rusted guns, cutlasses and other weapons were also scattered about seemed to warrant the belief that the pirate vessel had gone down in the midst of a sea fight.

This assumption was further borne out when the exploration was carried further.

In the main cabin other skeletons were found. Indications and marks of the destructive work of shells were also found.

The pirate vessel had gone down undoubtedly in the midst of a sea fight.

Perhaps some war vessel had overtaken and sunk her. However it was, there was no doubt that retribution most terrible had overtaken the rascally crew.

"Air yew sure thar ain't a heap of gold aboard this ere ship?" asked the Yankee, putting his helmet close to Frank's.

"It is possible," replied the young inventor.

"Why not look for it, then? Mebbe it would make us all rich."

"That is a good suggestion, and we will act upon it," replied Frank.

And he at once proceeded to carry this plan out. The ship was thoroughly explored.

But no treasure chamber was found and no gold. Then the possible truth dawned upon Barney.

"I have it, I think," he said. "Shure before the pirate was sunk mebbe the others boarded her an' tuk away all the goold an' silver."

"Why, of course," cried Frank, "that is no doubt the way of it."

Ananias was disappointed, but determined to have some relic of the vessel at least. So he secured a gold hilt from one of the rusted swords.

Frank and Barney were standing side by side when an astounding thing occurred. They had just exchanged remarks, and Frank was about to turn to the Celt again, when —presto! As if by magic, Barney flashed instantly from sight.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ELECTRIC FISH.

Barney's disappearance was extremely sudden. For a moment Frank was dumfounded.

Then he had presence of mind enough to look down and saw the truth at once. A section of the planking beneath the Celt had given way.

Down he had gone like a flash to the hold.

Happily he struck upon his feet and sustained no severe injury. He soon came up the companionway nimbly.

Frank and Ananias were both overjoyed to see that he had safely returned, and the Yankee fairly embraced him.

To this Barney seriously objected, for there was not the least thing about him which was sentimental. However all were brighter in spirit.

But their object, which was to explore the wreck, had been accomplished. It was now decided to return to the Salamander.

The important thing was to, if possible, find the Oriental.

There was but one way in which to do this, and it was to seek out every sunken wreck in the Indian Sea and explore it. In the course of time it looked logical that they should find the wreck if it was not, as might be well feared, engulfed wholly in sand.

As yet they were far from the spot where it was supposed to have gone down.

There was no positive proof that the latitude and longitude given was correct.

But to approximately locate it was something.

The three divers now returned safely to the Salamander.

They soon left the wreck of the sunken pirate far behind.

Its fearful career and end was something to ponder upon. It had no doubt been many years since its black flag terrorized the merchantmen of those seas.

The Salamander once more proceeded on its way, and now the voyagers were keenly on the alert for sunken vessels.

Particularly was the Yankee detective excited, for he was extremely anxious to find the Oriental.

"If I kin jist git that evidence tew git Al Bainbridge out of prison I shall be happy as a durned galoot," he cried; "by gosh all 'taters, I'm pooty sure we'll do ther trick tew."

"We will certainly find the Oriental if she is not too deeply sunk in the ocean sands," declared Frank.

The bed of the sea now began to undergo a change.

Great reefs of shining white were piled up to a great height.

Beyond these mighty growths of coral there were ledges of some sort of black rock and deep valleys between stupendous walls.

Truly the wonders of the sea exceeded those of the earth. It was like going into a Hades to sail down into this valley.

The voyagers gazed spellbound upon the scene about them. The Yankee could not restrain himself.

"By gosh 't' blazes!" he cried. "I never seen anything like this 'ere aout of a dream. It beats anything I ever saw, yew bet. Why, ther Green Mountings ain't in it a leetle bit."

Frank laughed.

"I presume that if the Green Mountains were covered with water they would make an impressive appearance also," he said, "the water magnifies to a great extent."

The words were hardly spoken when a terrific shock prostrated both men. The Yankee was a trifle stunned, but Frank was on his feet again quickly.

"Hi there, Barney!" he shouted. "What has happened?"

Barney was hanging to the wheel, and the machinery was buzzing like mad.

As soon as the Celt could collect himself he replied:

"Shure, sor, I dunno; there's somethin', I think, has sthruck the boat, but divil a bit do I know phwativer it was."

Frank rushed up into the main tower and looked about the boat. Then just a few yards in the rear he saw the cause of the disturbance.

There was the strangest sea monster he had ever seen. It was a cross between a huge sunfish and a wolf.

It was very thin, but of enormous depth of frame, with a long, serpent-like tail, and a mouth filled with wolf-like fangs.

What was curious about it was that a strange, luminous light seemed to be emitted from its body at intervals, much like that given forth by a glow worm on land.

The huge monster was swimming leisurely behind the Salamander. It would seem probable that the fish had come full tilt in collision with the boat.

But this was quickly disproved.

The fish slowly approached the boat, and came very gently in contact with it.

Instantly there was a terrific shock, and Frank clung to an inner rail to avoid being thrown down again.

In an instant he saw the truth.

"An electrical fish!" he gasped. "The creature has got

more electricity stored in its carcass than an ordinary dynamo. Here is a pretty scrape."

Indeed this was true, as Frank knew. The least contact of the steel hull of the boat with the fish gave it a shock as powerful as that from a heavy battery. While the fish might not be able to do the boat any great harm, still it could create much annoyance.

So Frank saw at once that he must devise a way to get rid of this new and unwelcome acquaintance.

By this time the Yankee and Pomp had joined him.

"Jerusha's sunbonnet!" gasped Ananias. "What ther deuce is ther matter, anyway? It seems tew me pesky queer what is hittin' this boat!"

"Look out there and you'll see," said Frank.

Ananias trembled like an aspen at sight of the electrical fish. He rubbed his eyes to make sure that he could see straight.

"Jemina an' pancakes!" he exclaimed in amazement, "is that ther critter thet run intew us?"

"That's the critter," said Frank.

"Wall, naow, tell him we'll surrender, fer b'gosh he's big enough tew swallow us, boat and all."

"I believe you," said Frank, "but I think I can give him some of the same medicine which he has been giving us!"

"Eh, haow dew yew make that aout?"

"I'll show you!"

The electrical fish seemed contented to swim leisurely along in the rear of the Salamander.

It did not attempt to touch the boat again, and Frank made quick work.

His great fear was that the powerful shocks which the creature seemed capable of giving the boat would damage or derange the clock-like machinery of the Salamander.

So he made quick work to offset this peril with a new plan.

In the pilot-house there was a small platform with glass legs, which Frank had constructed for just such a contingency as the present

He placed this in front of the keyboard, and said:

"All of us must stand upon this stool. We will be safe while we stand on it, for I am going to charge the steel hull of the Salamander with electricity. Remember that to step off this stool may be a fatal move for you. So do not forget. Now, are you ready?"

Barney was already on the platform. Pomp followed, and the Yankee detective was next.

Frank took a coil of wire and connected it with a small knob in the partition of the pilot-house.

Then he stepped upon the platform and pressed a button.

"The connection is made," he said; "the vessel's hull is charged."

"Shure, Misther Frank, av the beast cums agin the boat this toime he'll be afther gettin' all he wants."

"Well, I think so," said Frank, with a grim smile. "Keep your eye on him, Pomp. I am going to try and end the game at once."

In fact Barney and Ananias were already watching the huge fish which yet swam leisurely in the rear of the boat.

So intent were they that they did not see the move which Frank made.

Quick as a flash Frank shut off the engines of the Salamander, instantly slacking its speed.

The result was that the big fish was unable to stop quick enough to avoid a collision.

It struck the rear end of the vessel squarely. The next moment there was a commotion.

For a moment the water around the Salamander boiled like a cauldron.

Nothing could be seen from the windows.

Then, when the commotion finally ceased and the waters cleared, the huge fish was nowhere to be seen.

Cries of amazement escaped the lips of the others. But Frank only smiled grimly.

"Be me sowl, phwat became av the crather?" cried Barney.

"Golly, he done skinned out quick 'nuff!" said Pomp.

"Thet's durned funny!" declared Ananias. "Did yew blow him all tew leetle bits, Frank?"

"Not at all!" said Frank, with a smile; "he is probably now on the surface, belly up. If, however, he survived the shock, he has got out of sight and will not return."

"Wall, I never," said the detective, in amazement; "thet beats all my Aunt Hetty's relations. This 'ere electricity is a curus thing fer sure."

"It will revolutionize the world yet," said Frank, confidently.

"I believe yew, I swan!"

"It may even be employed yet to unravel and detect crime, thereby doing away with detectives."

Ananias stared a moment and then scratched his head dubiously.

"I don't know abaout thet," he said, slowly; "but then—thur's no tellin'. Mebbe it will, but jest naow I'm havin' my innings, yew bet!"

Everybody laughed at this, but an incident at that moment almost instantly brought the merriment to an end.

Something descended with a thud upon the deck of the Salamander, and she was carried down to the bottom and held there.

CHAPTER VIII.

ANOTHER SUNKEN VESSEL.

For a moment none in the party were able to guess what had happened. Then Frank sprang into the conning tower.

He saw a long, dark body lying across the deck of the boat. It was its weight which weighed the Salamander down.

It was round in shape like a mighty cable, and for a moment Frank half suspected that this was what it might be.

Then he reflected that this was absurd, for there would be no call for the laying of a cable across this part of the ocean.

But what was it?

The young inventor reversed the engines and tried to draw the boat back from beneath the mighty roll. But this was a failure.

"Jemima!" exclaimed Ananias, "we're in a wuss scrape nor ever naow, Frank. What air we goin' lew dew?"

"I can't say just yet," said Frank in a dubious manner. "First of all I'd like to know what has fallen on to us."

"Phwativer it moight be il's moighty heavy, sor!" averred Barney. "I'm afraid it'll crack the plates av the boat. Mither Frank."

It was an anxious moment for all. But just as Frank had brought out his diving suit, Pomp cried:

"Golly, Marse Frank, I done believe dat it is movin'."

"Moving!" exclaimed Frank, in amazement; "then it is alive. Maybe"—he gave a great start—"maybe it's the sea serpent or—some other monster."

Then he hastily donned his helmet and made for the vestibule. Barney put on a helmet and followed him.

A moment later both were on deck. Frank went straight up to the huge log-like weight and touched it.

He was astounded, for it was flesh. A living creature, or at least a part of one it was which lay across the hull of the Salamander.

Frank hesitated but a moment, then raising his ax dealt the object a heavy blow.

The blade went deep into the scales and blood spurted forth, coloring the water. Instantly the great roll was lifted from the deck and went coiling over the reef beyond.

There was a vision in the glare of the searchlight of a long dorsal fin and a writhing tail of monster proportions which went gliding away.

This was all that was seen of what the voyagers always firmly believed was the sea serpent of questionable existence.

The strain upon the braces and plates of the Salamander was quite severe, but yet nothing was broken or damaged. It was a narrow escape.

"Well," said Frank when he returned to the cabin after this experience, "if these are the sort of sea monsters we are to find in the Indian Ocean we must be constantly on our guard."

"Golly! p'raps dat whale wha' swallowed Jonah moughf be about," ventured Pomp, with dilated eyeballs.

"Begorra av he is he'll shurely go for yez," cried Barney; "so yez might say yez prayers."

"Hnh! Don't beleibe he go fo' me harf so quick as fo' yo' Fishman," blustered Pomp. "Kain't see no reason why. Mebbe yo' fink I take yo' insults, sah!"

"Shure, av yez call that an insult, yez can," grinned Barney.

"'Pear to me yo' hab a heap to say 'bout dat whale."

"Bejabers, I'll go yez aven up that I know as much about him as yez do, navvur!"

"Am' sayin' yo' don't, an' I fink it berry likely dat yo' know a good deal mo'," sniffed Pomp. "I don' keep sich company, I don't. I'se a 'spectable man, sah!"

"Be me sowl, I believe yez are a daisy," scoffed Barney. "I'm sthuck on yez mesilf."

"And I'm jes' as badly stuck on yo', too," ejaculated Pomp, as he made a swipe at the Celt.

The latter dodged this, and then the fun began.

For some while they enjoyed a genuine old-fashioned rough and tumble. Then something happened which brought them back to their feet and their senses.

The Yankee, Ananias Kedge, was in the conning tower, and watching the pathway of the searchlight, which shone far ahead.

Suddenly he cried:

"Hooray! Thar's another sunken ship. Mebbe it's ther Oriental."

In a moment Frank was in the pilot-house. He focused the searchlight upon the sunken vessel.

And in truth it required but a brief inspection to satisfy him that the Yankee was right.

There was a sunken vessel directly in their course.

It lay partly upon a sunken reef, and some of its spars were yet standing.

Frank at once sent the Salamander toward it.

Long before they reached it Frank saw that it was a sunken steamer.

Her funnels stood up straight and unharmed.

Ananias Kedge was fairly beside himself with excitement.

"Whoop-la!" he shouted. "Durn my hat! Molasses cakes an' gingerbread! I never saw anything so likely as thet. Thar ain't enny doubt but thet it's ther Oriental! Whoop-la!"

Down upon the sunken wreck bore the submarine boat.

In a few moments it was within close focus of the electric light. The Salamander sailed right down under the big steamer's stern.

There were letters upon the stern, but the seaweed dripping over the rail hid a part of them, which undoubtedly was the vessel's name.

Kedge could not wait to get his helmet on, so excited was he.

"Green flies and grasshopper!" he cried; "I tell yew thet old Kedge is allus bound tew unravel a mystery. This is ther biggest case I ever hed!"

"Easy!" cried Frank, as he was about to open the vestibule door to the deck. "I don't know that I have any legal right to prevent your committing suicide, but I don't want you to drown the rest of us."

"I beg yure pardon," spluttered the excited detective. "Yew see I'm so anxious thet I fergot abaout ther water. Air yew reddy tew go out tew?"

"I will be in a moment," said Frank. "Barney, bring me a helmet."

"All roight, sor, an'——"

"Well?"

"Shure, sor, don't yez need me along, too?"

"You can come if you like," said Frank; "but make haste—we are all ready."

"To be shure, sor."

Barney was ready in a jiffy, and a moment later the three were out on the deck.

It did not take Kedge but a moment to reach up and scrape away the seaweed over the letters on the vessel's stern.

And there in the full glare of the electric light the submarine explorers read with varied emotions:

"Oriental, San Francisco."

Kedge danced a regular Indian dance on the deck of the Salamander.

Indeed, so excited did he become that he kicked off his leaden shoes. In an instant he shot upward.

He would certainly have gone to the surface, for the air in the reservoir made him very buoyant, had he not clutched the rail of the sunken ship.

Here he clung with his feet above his head, vainly endeavoring to assume a perpendicular posture.

Frank and Barney went to his aid, and, pulling him down, fastened his leaden shoes on again.

Then Frank shouted:

"Don't let the exuberance of your feelings get you into trouble, Kedge!"

"That settles it. I'm all right now!" cried the Yankee; "b'gosh, but I thought I wuz bound fer ther top, onct thar!"

The three divers now carefully climbed over the rail of the Oriental.

For a vessel which had been twenty years at the bottom of the sea, she was remarkably well preserved.

The rigging and even rotting portions of her sails were yet scattered over her deck. Everything showed that she had gone down in a storm.

But the immediate cause had been the springing of a leak beyond a doubt. Her masts were almost intact.

The divers for a few moments stood upon the Oriental's deck gazing about them with wonderment.

They naturally looked for a skeleton or the remains of some one or more of the luckless crew. But if any had been on deck when the ship went down, they were not there now.

What was in the cabin remained to be seen.

The Yankee detective depended upon finding some evidence aboard which would of course be in the possession of Coleman Drake.

That the secretary had remained below decks during the storm with the other passengers was quite likely. In that case his body was to be looked for there.

Along the deck the explorers slowly made their way.

So little injured had the Oriental been that it was easy enough to see that had she sunk within reach of the necessary facilities, she would doubtless have been raised.

Frank was the first to reach the main hatch.

He saw that this had been fastened down. But it was only a few moments' work to hew away the braces.

Then it was lifted.

The companionway was revealed, and on the stairs a ghastly scene.

It filled all with horror!

There were the ghastly skeletons of fully twenty poor wretches, drowned like rats in a trap.

It was a tragic end for them, and the explorers realized this strongly at the moment.

"It's a dredful hard sight," said Ananias to Frank. "Ugh! it must hev bin an awful death fer them!"

"Awful indeed!" said Frank. "Can you hope to identify your man in that ghastly heap?"

The Yankee detective did not reply. The question staggered him somewhat.

Had he come all this way under the sea to secure the much desired evidence only to meet with defeat?

CHAPTER IX.

ON BOARD THE ORIENTAL.

It was certainly a discouraging reflection. But Ananias Kedge had a certain element of tenacity in his nature akin to that of the bulldog.

He could not easily give up in the face of obstacles.

He was determined to secure the vindication of Albert Bainbridge if it was within the power of human being to do so.

For some while he stood at the head of the companionway gazing at the heap of skeletons.

Frank and Barney were close by, awaiting patiently his action.

But they had not much longer to wait. The detective began to descend the stairway.

In order to do this it was necessary to brush away a few of the skeletons.

But this he did with little repugnance. Then he descended into the cabin.

At the long table the chairs were yet placed as if the passengers had but just risen from eating.

Upon the table were the plates, and even the silver and cutlery, corroded and rusted somewhat by the action of the water, but intact.

In one of the chairs there yet sat the skeleton of a man.

His bones were held together by shreds of dried tissue and particles of his clothing.

The detective paused by the skeleton and picked up a rusted and corroded chain and watch.

The detective examined the watch, rightly judging that it might be a clew to the identity of the dead man in the chair.

Upon the chain was a small charm. Frank was by Kedge's side when he opened this charm.

It contained the miniature of a woman and two initials. D C. The Yankee detective placed his helmet against Frank's and shouted:

"I hev found ther cuss. Them initials mean Drake Coleman."

"On my word, I believe you are right," cried Frank.

"In course I am. This ere is ther chap. But—I'm stumped fer evidence."

There certainly was nothing on the person of the dead man which would serve for such. Only the watch and a few coins were found.

Time and the action of the water had effectually removed and effaced all else.

If there had been important papers in the dead villain's pockets they were gone beyond reclamation.

It was nigh a bitter disappointment for the detective. An ordinary man would have abandoned the case in despair.

But not so Kedge.

He was, however, in absolute doubt as to what to do, when Frank whispered to him:

"On my word," said the young inventor, "why don't you look for the fellow's room? It seems as if you would be certain to find evidence there."

The detective gave a start.

"His stateroom!" he exclaimed. "A capital idea, I swan!"

Kedge found, among other things on the person of Coleman, a rusted key with a tag.

On the tag there was yet a number, and this was made out to be 22. This was doubtless the number of his stateroom.

It was not at all beyond reason that some evidence might be found there; so the explorers started to hunt up stateroom 22.

They were not long in finding it in the forward cabin.

Despite the rustiness of the lock, the key opened it, and the submarine explorers entered.

The stateroom was similar to others, but in one end was a large and perfectly preserved leather trunk.

This was closed and locked.

There were articles of toilet, such as a razor, combs and other necessaries scattered about.

The mattress yet remained, and some of the bedding.

But the only thing which seemed of any particular value or which might afford a clew, was the trunk.

This could not be opened, however, by any ordinary means.

Time had caused the lock to corrode, and the leather had swelled to twice its original thickness.

But in its present state it could be cut like cheese.

Frank pulled out his knife and cut around the lock. It gave way, and the lid was raised.

To the surprise of all, the interior of the trunk had all these years been comparatively dry.

The water had certainly swollen the leather so that all cracks or crevices were closed, and the water could not creep in.

As a result, the contents of the trunk were quite uninjured.

Everything was nearly as fresh as the day they were placed there. Even the linen was intact.

There were many articles of value. A small metal case contained jewels of much value. Several bags of American eagles were in one corner of the trunk.

There were also books and papers preserved intact, and it was among these that Frank looked for the evidence which the detective needed.

This resulted in an important discovery.

Among the papers Frank suddenly unearthed a notebook. This contained many closely written pages.

Frank held it up and gave a violent start as he saw how it was superscribed.

Thus the inscription read:

"To whomsoever this diary and chronicle may come after I am dead. Read it with charity for the benighted soul of the writer.

"DRAKE COLEMAN, ESQ."

Frank passed the diary to the Yankee detective, who read the superscription. Kedge was much excited.

He pulled three chairs to the table. They were of toughest oak and strong enough to support the weight of the explorers.

Then all three put their helmets together, and Frank read the diary of the murderer, which was a concise account of the terrible crime.

Word for word Frank read the terrible record of an awful tragedy.

It was as told by the perpetrator of the crime and therefore doubly interesting and conclusive.

Thus it read:

"This is the life story and confession of one whose career opened in the most propitious manner. Whose future at one time looked to be of the brightest, whose fortunes were cast in pleasant waters, but alas! Fate and folly clouded all, even from a faint mist to the black pall of dishonor and death.

"This chronicle is intended for the eye of no person while the writer is alive.

"Only after he is dead must it be brought forth and read. Then may the terrible lesson be sufficiently obvious to affect the career of some foolish young man about starting out in life. This is my story:

"I, Drake Coleman, the son of Reginald Coleman, Esq., of Cliff Towers, England. Our family were lineal descendants of Earl Coleman of Wesse, in the days of Queen Bess.

"But the family heritage had dwindled and the title became worthless, so that for the past two generations at least the name of Coleman would hardly be honored in any English bank. But my father had married a wealthy lady of the west country, and she had enriched the family.

"But people of our class were so oppressed in England that my father decided to emigrate to America finally. This he did, and we became residents of New York.

"Then my father died. This was a hard blow to us. The management of the estate fell into my hands.

"A thousand opportunities were offered me upon every hand for advancement and betterment. I might have become one of the leading men of the times.

"But it was not in me. Foolishly I was led away by gay companions, and my money began to go like water. I spent all the interest and principal left me, and also my sister's patrimony. I fell in love with an actress.

"This sealed my fate. From the highest to the lowest I fell. This settled all.

"My mother died in a broken-hearted state. My sister married and went away. I was left alone, but, alas! penniless. My money had all fled and now my friends deserted me.

"Not until the bitter extreme had been reached did I return to my senses and break from the old life.

"I reformed, and after a hard struggle secured a position as private secretary for Mr. Samuel Bainbridge. For years I was his faithful employe.

"I was happy in my new life, and felt that there was yet something in life worth living for, when a terrible thing happened.

"In the city of Washington there lives a man by the name of Gustave Elrich. Beware of him. He is in league with the devil.

"Gustave Elrich had persuaded the banker, Mr. Bainbridge, to go into a speculative deal.

"In the course of transaction, Elrich gave Mr. Bainbridge a promissory note for one hundred thousand dollars. When this fell due it was protested and defaulted.

"This annoyed Mr. Bainbridge much, and he finally sent me to Washington to collect the note.

"I well remember that visit. It was the means of coupling my soul with sin.

"The man Elrich is a devil in man's disguise. I cannot tell you enough about him. I at once fell into his power. He was possessed of a terrible hypnotic power.

"I was a peculiarly sensitive victim and he at once got me under his absolute control. I was compelled to do his bidding.

"Then he informed me that he did not intend to ever pay the note.

"That I must go to Mr. Bainbridge's private office and get the note.

"That if he should interfere with me in securing the note, I must murder him and without compunction. All this and more he commanded me to do.

"When I left the home of Elrich in Washington I was another man. I was wholly under the power of a devil, and knew that I was powerless. I was compelled to do his bidding. I went to Washington a serious, honest man. I came back a murderer in intent."

CHAPTER X.

BARNEY'S DISAPPEARANCE

Frank paused at this juncture in the terrible confession of Drake Coleman.

There was something horrifying in the narrative; the

thought that this poor wretch was wholly under the hypnotic influence of a fiend was awful to think of.

"Jemima!" exclaimed Kedge. "Huckleberries and peanuts! thet changes my 'pinyun uv poor Drake Coleman. He warn't so much tew blame, after all."

"Begorra, it's very quare how that vilyun cud mek him do jest as he pleased. I'm shure he'd have a harrud toime makin' av me do it!"

"I agree with you, Barney!" laughed Frank, "but you see this poor devil of a secretary was a different kind of a man!"

"Shure an' I think he must have been."

"Thet hypnotism is curus bizness, anyway," declared Kedge. "I never cud understand it!"

But Frank now went on with the chronicle.

"How can I tell the awful story of crime with which my soul is at present charged? Under the influence of that fiend it was I who went to New York—who murdered Samuel Bainbridge and blackened my soul! There is no help for such as I.

"Oh, God, how I have suffered since in the depths of my mind! This crime, for which I was not truly responsible, has cursed my life, and made me a wanderer among men upon the face of the earth. May the ban of Heaven fall upon the foul fiend who had me in his power!

"What shall I do? Unhappy man am I! I dare not return to confess for fear that my story will not be believed. But my last request will be that the kind person who watches over my last moments will send this journal to the chief of the United States Detective Bureau, that justice may be done an innocent man, for Albert Bainbridge is not guilty of the foul crime.

"I am the murderer—a helpless tool in the hands of an unprincipled villain.

"Elrich saved his hundred thousand dollars, but he has consigned his soul to Hades. Therefore he need not be the envied of any man. May retribution overtake him, is the prayer of Drake Coleman."

This ended the chronicle. Of course the pages were soaked in the sea water, and it was necessary to handle them with the utmost care. Fortunately, the ink was of the kind which did not run, and the writing bid fair to remain legible.

For some moments after reading the journal not a word was spoken.

Then Kedge said:

"Hairpins and gumdrops! this is ther biggest, luckiest streak of my life. Whoop-la! Al Bainbridge is a vindicated man!"

"There are some obstacles yet in the way," declared Frank.

"What air they?"

"We may fall into some serious scrape before we get back and lose our lives. Again, the courts may hesitate to accept this statement of ours, which is certainly an astonishing one, that we secured the evidence in this manner. All those things must be considered."

"Wall," said the Yankee, sententiously, "they must be a condemned set of fools if they don't believe it. Thet's all I kin say!"

"I agree with you there," laughed Frank, "but that does not settle the case."

"In course not," agreed the Yankee detective. "Howsumever, we'll take back all ther evidence we kin git."

"Just so! Now, what more can we do aboard this ship?"

"Nuthin, unless we take some of ther murderer's things hyar!"

"That is a good idea."

Accordingly some of the dead murderer's trinkets were taken. Also the water-soaked log of the Oriental, and some of the captain's effects, to prove that the submarine explorers had really visited the wreck.

Then, all this being done, there was no better move left than to return to the Salamander.

Accordingly the trio set out for the submarine boat.

Leaving the deck of the Oriental, Frank led the way, carrying the log of the Oriental. The Yankee was next to him, carrying the effects of Coleman, and Barney came last.

Frank reached the rail of the Salamander and clambered aboard. Kedge followed him.

Then, just as they were about to enter the vestibule, Frank turned about.

"Where is Barney?" he asked.

The Yankee turned about.

Barney was not to be seen.

The intervening space to the rail of the sunken ship was illumined by the electric light.

But he was not in sight.

For a moment Frank was puzzled. He could not believe that harm had come to the Celt.

"Perhaps he has gone back to the wreck," he muttered.

But there would seem no reason for this. The two divers waited what seemed a reasonable amount of time.

Then Frank was really alarmed.

"What can be wrong!" he cried. "Certainly something has happened to him."

"Jimeracks an' popguns!" exclaimed the Yankee. "I believe you're right."

"We must find out about it," said Frank. "Barney is too valuable a man to lose."

So Frank climbed down from the Salamander's deck. Back he went toward the Oriental.

Kedge followed him.

Not a trace of Barney was to be found.

They even went aboard the wreck and searched everywhere. But he was not there.

What did it mean?

Frank exhausted his brain trying to solve the question. He was utterly unable to do so.

The only hypothesis of reasonable sort which suggested itself was that some monster shark had descended upon the Celt and carried him away.

At any rate it looked to be a certain fact that his fate was forever sealed, and that he would never be seen again.

Frank groaned in horror.

"That is awful!" he exclaimed. "Barney is the most faithful of men. It is dreadful."

Both prepared to give up the quest and return to the Salamander, when a sudden idea came to Frank.

This was to follow the Celt's footprints in the sand and see where he had gone. This might possibly tell the story.

It was easy enough to trace them, for the water was too still at this depth to efface them.

Frank and the Yankee followed them carefully for some ways. Then they made a thrilling discovery.

An orifice in the sand was disclosed just large enough to admit of the passage of a man's body.

Into this no doubt Barney had inadvertently slipped. It was a horrible thought.

Where did the orifice go? What was at the end of it?

These were the questions which naturally enough suggested themselves to Frank and the Yankee.

Frank scraped away the sand about the orifice and revealed a jagged crust of coral.

It was a hidden reef, and the aperture no doubt led into some cavern underneath.

Frank leaned over the edge and tried to pierce the blackness below. He could not do so.

Then he acted upon a sudden resolution.

He drew the coil of rope from his waist, and said to the Yankee:

"Lower me down there. I am going to try and bring Barney up."

"All right, b'gosh!"

Frank slid down through the orifice on the rope. The Yankee held his weight steadily.

Then after some twenty feet of the rope had run out the weight ceased. Frank had reached the bottom of the cavern.

The first thing that Frank saw in the glare of his helmet lamp was a dark form at his feet.

He knew that it was Barney.

Instantly he bent down over the Celt and raised his helmet. Through the glass visor he saw that the Irishman's face was white and set.

But even as he looked Barney's lids moved and his eyes opened.

"Thank God!" cried Frank, "he is alive!"

The truth could be readily seen. The Celt had struck the hard reef below with such force that he had been momentarily deprived of his senses.

Frank could give him no stimulant, but he fastened the rope at Barney's belt and took the loose end in his hand.

The Yankee easily pulled him up out of the coral cave, and then they together pulled Barney up.

The Celt was by this time well recovered and able to get upon his feet.

"Be me sowl!" he cried, "I was shure that I'd niver see yez agin. Shure, it was a sudden fall."

"Thank Heaven, that it was no worse," cried Frank. "Your life is spared by a miracle, Barney!"

"Shure, sor, I believe yez."

"Now let us go back to the Salamander at once. This fooling around in the deep sea is foolish and dangerous business."

"Great grasshoppers!" exclaimed the Yankee. "I'd be darned glad tew go home tew wunst."

"Well, that is what we will do!" declared Frank. "I, for one, have had enough to do with this sort of thing. What say you?"

"I'm with yew every time!" declared Kedge.

So they made quick time back to the submarine boat.

Just as they climbed over the rail a startling thing happened.

It seemed as if the bed of the ocean was convulsed. The Salamander was thrown upon her side and Frank and his companions got into the vestibule just in time.

A great fissure opened in the bed of the ocean.

The Salamander was upon the very brink of this. It was a moment of horror, for she seemed certain to fall into it.

CHAPTER XI.

THE NEW ISLE.

Pomp's presence of mind it was which saved the day.

Just in time he switched the lever and sent some of the water out of the tank.

The submarine boat sprang up some ways. The waters now surged about it furiously.

For some moments it was whirled about like a top. It seemed for a time as if damage must be done to it.

Then Frank and his companions entered from the vestibule.

"Send the boat to the top, Pomp!" he cried. "We may get crushed down here!"

"All right, sah!"

Up shot the submarine boat to the surface of the sea. But here matters were found almost as bad.

The boat just escaped the sweep of a tidal wave.

This rolled far to the eastward.

Then for a moment the Salamander was surrounded with waves mountain high.

Up—up—up! it went, as if buoyed by some mighty power underneath.

Then a dark cloud swept over the sky, and for a moment all was inky blackness.

When this had passed the Salamander was on the crest of a mighty wave.

The sky had assumed a coppery hue, and the sea rapidly fell. As soon as it had reached almost a calm the voyagers were astonished to see a mighty heap of shining sand and reef rising hundreds of feet out of the sea to the eastward.

"Begorra, phwat land is that?" cried Barney.

"Can it be one of the Chagas Islands?" exclaimed Frank.

"Naow thet's queer. They ought tew be several hundred miles west of us, I reckin," said the Yankee.

"That is right," declared Frank. "They certainly should be."

Then like a flash an idea came to him.

"I've got it!" he cried.

"Eh?"

"We have just experienced a fearful revulsion of nature! There has been an earthquake, and some volcanic disturbance has brought a new island into existence."

For a moment the voyagers were overwhelmed with this assertion, which doubtless embodied a fact.

"Golly!" exclaimed Pomp, "does yo' mean to say dat island has jes' been lift raight up out ob de sea?"

"That is just what I mean," declared Frank.

"Dat am berry wonderful!"

"Begorra, if there ain't a ship on it!" cried Barney, with sudden amazement.

"Where?" exclaimed Frank.

"Yonder be the height av that cliff," declared the Celt. "Can't yez all see?"

There was no disputing the fact; Barney was right.

There, resting upon a section of the coral cliff, so recently raised from the bed of the ocean was the hull of a ship.

All stared at it.

Then the Yankee cried:

"Bumble bees an' spotted heifers! It air ther Oriental high an' dry!"

It required not a second glance for all to see that this was true.

Wonder of wonders!

The sunken steamer, after having remained for twenty years at the bottom of the sea, had at last been brought to the light of day once more.

It was like a dream, and the voyagers actually pinched themselves to make sure that they were wide awake.

"Whurroo!" cried Barney. "I never heern of the loikes av that!"

"Golly! it am jes' laike a story book!" cried Pomp.

"On my word, gents," said Kedge, taking a fresh chew of tobacco, "I'm goin' tew pay thet isle a visit if I have tew swim over thar!"

"There will be no need of that," declared Frank; "we will all pay the isle a visit."

"Thet's the way tew talk," declared Kedge. "Whoop-la! I ain't seen any sich curiosity as thet since Barnum's cherry eat."

Frank made careful soundings and found that the boat could approach safely within one hundred feet of the shore.

It was a curious sight.

The new made isle was rapidly shaping itself to meet the action of the water.

Great slices of sand and reef were being washed down until a hard beach could be formed.

But the body of the isle itself stood up like a church steeple, with a solidity which could not be questioned.

A small boat was produced from the hold of the Salamander, and Frank and the Yankee and Pomp entered it.

It was Barney's turn to remain aboard the boat, and he did not demur.

Pulling off from the Salamander, the party quickly made the shore. The boat was carried far up on the sands.

Then they proceeded to climb the cliffs.

Frank was the first to gain the summit of the upheaved reef. It was a wonderful scene spread to his view.

The new made isle covered many square miles in its area.

It was just as if the ocean had receded and left a portion of its surface exposed to view.

There were heaps of sea weeds, shells and marine growth.

Reaches of sand and coral basins of salt water rapidly evaporating. Fish and marine monsters of all kinds were wriggling about in the refuse.

It was certainly a wonderful scene, and the voyagers gazed upon it spellbound.

"Does it seem possible," said Frank, "that in course of time all these traces of the deep sea will be practically removed, and palm trees and jungles, green vegetation, birds, animals and reptiles will supersede all?"

"It is a problem jest a leetle beyond my depth," declared the Yankee detective; "it's hard fer me ter guess them kind."

"Or for anybody," said Frank.

Pomp was busy collecting beautiful shells. He had secured many strange specimens.

Frank and the Yankee now proceeded to pay a visit to the Oriental.

The sunken ship had tilted a trifle to one side, but yet the two explorers were able to walk her deck.

They visited the cabin, now drained of water. The skeletons strewn about were a sickening spectacle.

"I hev got a proposition," said Kedge, slowly. "I don't know as it will egsactly meet with yure approval."

"Well," said Frank, "it can at least be considered."

"Sartin! Naow I feel kinder bad fer these poor devils what hev lost ther lives hyar, an' I'll go yew that we take 'em out an kiver 'em decently up."

"Bury them!"

"Sartin!"

"It would be a humane task," said Frank. "And it shall be done. Pomp! come here!"

"All right, sah!"

The darky came running up.

"Go back to the Salamander and get picks and spades. Then we will proceed to bury these poor chaps."

Away went Pomp.

While he was gone Frank and the Yankee proceeded to pick up and arrange the scattered bones.

In a short while they had removed all the poor victims of the wreck from the cabin, and laid them upon the sands.

By this time Pomp had returned with the tools.

Then upon the summit of the cliff graves were dug, and the skeletons of the poor wretches were interred.

Over each grave a slab was placed, marked:

"Unknown! One of the company of the sunken ship Oriental. Buried A. D. 18—, by Frank Reade, Jr., Asaniah Kedge and Barney and Pomp. Requiescat in Pace!"

And there upon the lonely isle in the Indian Ocean the crew of the Oriental's crew may be found to-day.

This task completed, the explorers returned to the Salamander.

The submarine boat ran carefully away out of the embrace of the coral reefs, and then stood away across the Indian Ocean.

"Then yew ain't goin' tew return the way we came?" asked Kedge.

"No," replied Frank. "I want to sail all the way under the Indian Ocean. When we reach Malaysia then my purpose is to run to San Francisco; thence we will return home via Cape Horn."

"P'raps I'd better leave yew at 'Frisco," suggested the Yankee.

"Certainly. The sooner you get home the shorter will be Albert Bainbridge's term of imprisonment."

"Thet's the way I look at it."

So, as soon as these plans were made, the submarine boat was again sent beneath the surface.

To describe all the incidents which befell the party would require a large volume.

The sights they beheld were wonderful and varied.

In due course of time they reached the furthest limit of the Indian Ocean.

And here Frank, at the mouth of the Straits of Sunda, proposed that they return to the surface.

"We will then make Borneo," he said, "and the Celebean Sea; thence we will sail through Oceanica to Honolulu, and then to San Francisco."

"Thet is a tremenjus ways," ventured the Yankee.

"Yes," agreed Frank; "but I think we are good for it. The only barrier will be the wearing out of our electric engines."

"Is thar enny likelihood uv thet?" asked Kedge.

"Of course it is possible; but I think they will carry us through all right."

"Durned if I don't hope so."

"We will risk it."

"I jest wanter get tew 'Frisco, anyway."

"Have no fear. You will get there."

Frank did not feel so confident of this a short while later. He started to send the boat to the surface.

He switched the tank lever off. The pneumatic pumps churned and thumped.

But the boat did not rise.

Again and again Frank tried to make the boat rise.

But without success.

CHAPTER XII.

THE END.

Something was wrong.

What was it?

The young inventor rushed down into the tank room. It required but a few moments for him to discover a startling fact.

The water ran into the tank faster than the pumps could force it out. Then Frank got a water telescope and examined the interior of the tank.

An appalling truth was revealed to him.

There was an enormous breach in the upper section of the tank.

It was the exhausting of this section which always sent the vessel to the surface.

The lower section would raise the boat perhaps a hundred feet from the bottom, but that was all.

"My soul!" gasped the young inventor, "we are buried at the bottom of the sea."

He saw easily enough that the break was irreparable.

How it had happened he had no means of knowing.

The boat had probably come in contact with some object hard enough to indent its hull.

This had gradually grown weak, and the pressure of the sea upon it had finally broken it through.

However it was, the fact remained that the submarine boat was ruined.

It could never be repaired; Frank felt sure of this.

The situation was a most appalling one.

When it was made known to the others, the excitement was intense.

"Golly!" cried Pomp; "I fink it am chainces agin our eber seeing de city ob Readestown agin."

"Don't get discouraged," said Frank, pluckily. "We will find a way ashore."

"Huckleberries an' hornets!" exclaimed Kedge; "I hain't pertikerly afraid tew die myself, but I reckin it's fate thet Al Bainbridge must remain in prison the rest of his natural life."

"It is too bad," declared Frank. "I am not afraid but that we will escape safely enough."

"Oh, yew ain't?"

"No, not a bit."

"Haow dew yew make it aout?"

"Well, I have a plan."

"A plan?"

"Yes."

"Wall, naow I'm interested. What are yure plan?"

"Simply to run the boat up into as shallow water as possible on some of these islands and then wade ashore in our diving suits."

"Gimlets and corkscrews!" exclaimed the Yankee, "thet is a good scheme! I'd never hev thought of thet."

"Well," said Frank, "it will work. And my fear is that the other section of the tank will burst before we can get far. So I am going to make for the nearest land."

"Wha' will dat be, Marse Frank?" asked Pomp.

"Probably the Island of Sumatra," said Frank.

"Bumblebees an' 'taters!" exclaimed the Yankee. "I hope as haow thet thar won't be any cannibals thar tew eat us up."

"Have no fear of that," laughed Frank. "We will take our weapons along with us."

"Yew bet!"

The submarine boat was again started forward at a lively rate of speed.

Frank had to guess at the locality of the nearest land.

How far it was he could not reckon either.

But it was, he believed, distant not more than thirty miles.

Across the Straits of Sunda therefore the boat ran at full speed. Frank knew that there was no time to lose.

The anxiety of the voyagers was great. But now the vessel came to a plain which sloped upward.

"We are nearing land," declared Frank, who knew from the character of the sea plants.

Fairy grottoes of coral, forests of amber and ivory were passed in one beautiful and dizzy panorama.

Truly it was a sight worth looking at.

But the voyagers had no time to devote to this. All were intent upon getting to the end of their journey.

Upward still stretched the long reaches of sand and coral reef.

It seemed to Frank as if they would never succeed in getting across it.

The gauge in the pilot-house registered a depth of a hundred fathoms.

"We are nearing land," said Frank, confidently; "if the lower section of that tank only holds out now, we'll be all right."

But even as he spoke there was a sudden shock.

The Salamander's bow plowed a half dozen feet into the sand. The electric engines hummed.

Barney quickly shut them off.

Then the deep-sea explorers looked at each other.

"We're in for it," said Frank; "the crisis has come!"

"Wall," said the detective, coolly, "how's yer nerve?"

"Mine is all right," said Frank. "Bring out the diving suits, boys."

"All right, Marse Frank."

The Yankee suddenly bethought himself of a horrible possibility.

"Hambones and handsaws!" he exclaimed. "I believe we'll git awfully stuck, Frank?"

"How so?" asked the young inventor.

"Only think uv ther risk!"

"Risk!"

"Why, yes!"

"What do you mean?"

"Jes' think of gittin' away from ther boat an' not bein able to find ther land! An' then we cudn't find our way back tew ther boat! Great swattles! what would become av us?"

"Why—we would have to die, that is all," said Frank.

"All!"

"Why, certainly."

"Ain't that enough?"

"Why, of course. But I thought you were not afraid to die."

"In course I ain't, in a natural way. But that ain't dyin' it's jest bein' wiped aout uv literal existence!"

In spite of the seriousness of the situation Frank had to laugh at this unique hypothesis.

But Barney and Pomp now came back with the diving helmets.

These were quickly donned.

"Now take such things as you wish to save," Frank had said.

"Yew bet I'll save this ere journal uv Drake Coleman's Don't keer about nuthin' else," said the Yankee.

Frank took the log of the Oriental and some of his private papers. Barney and Pomp took such articles as they wished to retain.

Then all was in readiness for the leave-taking.

The four divers then left the cabin of the doomed Salamander.

The great invention of Frank Reade, Jr., had come to an unfortunate and untimely end.

But he said:

"Considering what we have accomplished with her, I think the submarine boat has been a success."

"So dew I!" cried Kedge: "it wuz ther biggest invention ever put onto ther face of ther airth. Cum on."

But Frank had provided himself with a small spool of what was called invisible electric wire.

This was fully ten miles in length.

He fastened one end upon the bow of the sunken boat. Then he began to unwind the spool.

"What air yew doing that fur?" asked the Yankee.

"You shall see," said Frank, "if your theory that we shall get lost should prove correct, I shall be able to at least find my way back to the boat."

"Hooray!" cried the Vermonter, "thar's no use in talkin', yew hev got a great head."

So the party went on in quest of the land.

That tramp across the bed of the sea was never forgotten.

It was very much different from walking on shore.

The leaden weights pulled heavily enough after them. It was a long, wearisome pull.

Mile after mile they struggled on.

But yet there was no indication of land. What did it mean?

Were they lost?

Had they missed their way, as the detective had feared they would, and would they have to return to the sunken boat to die?

All these horrible fears filled their minds.

Barney and Pomp were much exhausted, and a halt was called. All indulged in a long sleep.

When they awoke, there was no way to partake of refreshments. There was no other course but to keep on.

The distance, as recorded by Frank's spool of wire, was fully eight miles.

Unless land was reached very soon, they must give up the quest.

For there was need of food and drink, and it would be necessary to return to the boat to get these.

But they pushed on, though almost hopelessly, until of a sudden the end came.

Barney in front saw the water grow lighter. Then he saw waving palms and rocky cliffs.

He rushed forward and a moment more his head was out of water. He was upon the shore of a tropical isle or continent.

The others were quickly by his side.

It was but a moment's work for them to pull off their helmets and rush for the shore with loud cries of triumph.

Upon the sands they sank down exhausted.

A little spring trickled out of the cliff near.

To this they crept and slaked their thirst. Somewhat revived, they made their way along the beach.

It was not long before they came upon evidences of a plantation.

Then suddenly from a copse of junglewood a number of half-naked dusky forms sprung.

With wild cries they surrounded the castaways. For a moment all feared that they were about to be massacred.

But their fears were groundless.

For the natives were peaceful and friendly to the whites.

The exhausted quartet were taken to a village of huts near by.

Then, after being fed, they revived and told their story to the chief of the tribe, who had a smattering of English.

"All right," he said; "me take you to your friends. Dey be near by."

"Friends!" exclaimed Frank. "Are there white people near us?"

The chief nodded his head vigorously and said:

"Big ship cum from Ameriky. Over there now. Come to trade."

This was enough.

The eastaways raised a cheer.

It did not take them long to round a headland near, and there in the bay rode a fine ship.

She was a trader, and carried a United States flag.

The natives carried our voyagers out in canoes, and they were kindly welcomed by the captain and crew.

It did not take long to engage passage with Captain Burns aboard the Sea Gull, bound for San Francisco.

At Honolulu our friends were enabled to get a steamer. A few months later they were at home. That was, indeed, a happy day.

And here, dear reader, ends our story.

We need hardly say that Albert Bainbridge was released from prison. Gustave Elrich, the hypnotist, was arrested and paid the penalty of his crime.

Old Ananias Kedge is yet hard at his detective duties, but he never tires of telling of his exciting quest under the Indian Ocean with Frank Reade, Jr.

THE END.

Read "ALONG THE ORINOCO; OR, WITH FRANK READE, JR., IN VENEZUELA," which will be the next number (78) of "Frank Reade Weekly Magazine."

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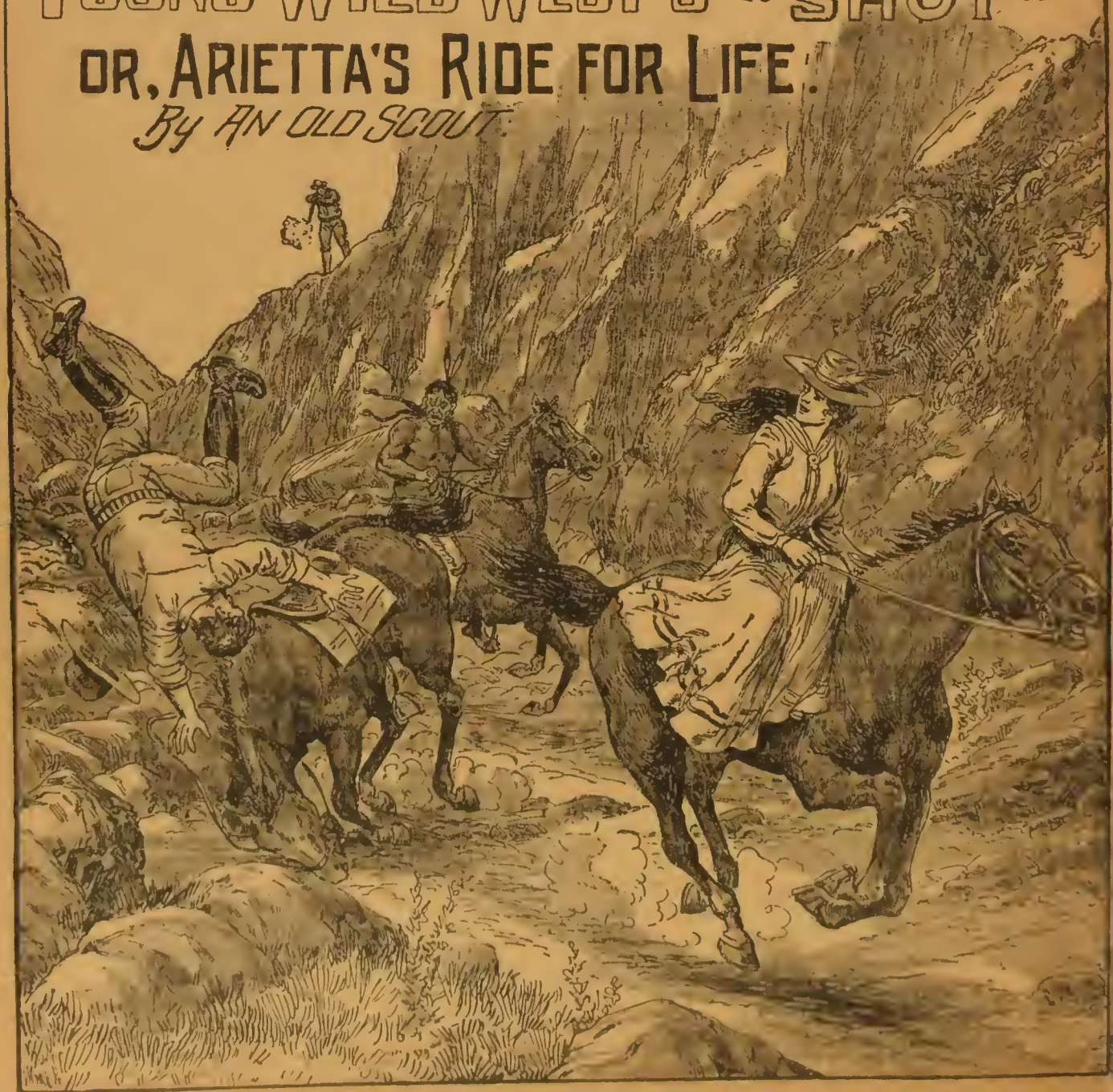

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